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**Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil,
political, economic, social and cultural rights,
including the right to development**

Written statement* submitted by Charitable Institute for Protecting Social Victims, The, a non-governmental organization in special consultative status

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[16 August 2021]

* Issued as received, in the language(s) of submission only.



Unilateral Coercive Measures (UCMs) are Deadly to Physical and Mental Patients

We note the joint statement of the UN Special Rapporteurs and Experts published on March, 1st 2021 reiterating that “billions of people ... risk being excluded from the benefits of COVID-19 immunization until 2024 ... undermining worldwide recovery” and that “Recovery from the pandemic is impossible unless it ends for everyone. [because] New mutating forms of the virus that may emerge in largely unvaccinated populations can pose a threat to all, including those previously vaccinated.”

We also recognize that recovery from the pandemic requires international cooperation and deeply regret that under the alarming emergency of the pandemic, unilateral coercive measures (UCM)s are still kept in place, deliberately and systematically depriving the people of target countries, especially the patients with physical and mental issues, from access to vaccine, life-saving medicine, medical care, food and income.

The effect of unilateral sanctions on the rights of vulnerable categories of society including the physical and mental patients needs to be studied under the pandemic as obstacles to the realization of all human rights including all social, economic and cultural rights including the right to life.

The experiences of NGOs who work with people with mental or physical disability in sanctioned countries demonstrate that UCMs undermine the capacity of NGOs to attract financial support or attain their goals of supporting patients or disadvantaged families, because unilateral sanctions target the economy of the sanctioned societies and prevents banking transactions and formal trade even for humanitarian items including medicine and vaccine.

Also the NGOs who work for and support patients with mental issues have reported lack of access to medicine and medical equipment due to imposition of unilateral sanctions.

Undoubtedly, the unilateral sanctions undermine the ability of countries to support the needs of patients and their capacity to deal with public health crisis and accessibility of COVID-19-related medicines and vaccines.

COVID-19 global challenge can only be addressed through global cooperation. Lives cannot be saved under unilateral sanctions and the vulnerable groups especially the patients cannot be protected by verbal messages.

Therefore, we call on the Human Rights Council to continue its previous calls on elimination of all UCMs under the pandemic, including the calls made by the UN Secretary-General, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Special Rapporteur on the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health; the Special Rapporteur on the negative impact of unilateral coercive measures on the enjoyment of human rights; the Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions; the Special Rapporteur on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment; the Special Rapporteur on the right to food; the Independent Expert on human rights and international solidarity and the Independent Expert on the promotion of a democratic and equitable international order.

We also call on all UN member States to translate their efforts to protect lives against UCMs into a legally binding instrument that bans free imposition of UCMs beyond the jurisdiction of the United Nations and the rule of law.
